



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

sciousness; to be thus inaccessible to all the miseries, terrors, fears, and uncertainties of life; clear, determined, radiantly blessed in your own selfhood; suffering that agony of hell and sin only when you voluntarily enter it to help to achieve the redemption of men even as Christ did,—this is an existence so glorious that it cannot even ask itself seriously the absurd question of a why or a wherefore.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION ON SHAKESPEARE'S "TEMPEST."

[Held at the Jacksonville Plato Club, by H. K. JONES, and reported by Mrs. SARAH DENMAN.]

In Shakespeare is consummated and celebrated the marriage of the Greek and Scandinavian cultures. The Greek age, the age of the ideal, the thought power, the fatherhood; the Scandinavian, the age of the actual, the will power, born of the heroic earth energies, the motherhood. And out of this Scandinavian maternity is the issue of the "Viking power," which leads modern enterprise; and without the marriage of these two cultures, the child, the realized Christianity of this age, could not have been born. Therefore, in Shakespeare are we historically in the fountains of modern Christian thought and achievement.

Shakespeare is not writing history or story, nor exhibiting mere gambollings of the imagination. His purpose is deep and living. He is portraying that which is eternal in the human soul; therefore he is immortal.

The "*Tempest*" is his programme. The unifying idea and key to the play is Life, in the world of time and sense. "*Tempest*" does not mean *a storm*, but is from "*tempus*," and signifies Life, and the two ways of life under the Divine Providences: the way of the providential and the fated experiences. To the man of righteousness and justice, the visible and invisible powers are subservient; to the man of injustice and evil, the same powers are dominant. The latter is fated, or destined, as in the speech of Ariel:

"You are three men of sin, whom destiny
 (That hath to instrument this lower world,
 And what is in't) the never surfeited sea
 Hath caused to belch up, and on this island
 Where man doth not inhabit; you 'mongst men
 Being most unfit to live," &c. (Act III., Sc. 3.)

The drama is not that which creates, but that which draws out, a portrait of what is in the soul. This poet is immortal, because he is dealing with themes which eternally live in the soul of man.

The subject, then, of this play is Life—our life. The characters are personifications of what is found in the human soul, and, accordingly, in the social life of the race. The two pictures, as designated in the idiom of our Scriptures, as viz. the natural and the spiritual man—or man generated down into nature, natural consciousness; and man regenerated back again to spirit, or spiritual consciousness. These are Prospero, the man of providential dealings, and Antonio, the man of fate.

The invisible powers serve Prospero; he is not ruled by circumstance. Safety and success are not due to human conditions and contrivance. The divine soul is superior to all natural conditions.

Miranda is daughter of a king. Sons and daughters, in all mythic language, personify wisdom and love—the affection of the spiritual mind represented by Miranda. She is moved to pity by the sight of suffering.

"O! the cry did knock
 Against my very heart"—

the piteous aspect of human affairs, in this world of time and sense. When we look upon those we see suffer, their cries do knock against our hearts, and, like Miranda, we cry,

"Poor souls! they perished."

But is it so? Prospero (wisdom) answers,

"Be collected: . . .
 No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart,
 There's no harm done."

In all these strange human experiences, there is no harm done. Divine wisdom and love work perfectly in this world; they never fail. Miranda asks,

"What foul play had we, that we came from thence?
Or blessed was't we did?"

Affection, without the knowledge or intelligence, does not see it. There is a doctrine that it is a calamity that the soul descends into this plane of time and sense. Prospero asks,

"Canst thou remember
A time before we came unto this cell?"

Miranda. "Certainly, Sir, I can."

Prospero. "By what?"

Miranda. "'Tis far off;
And rather like a dream, than an assurance
That my remembrance warrants."

The soul's reminiscence of its former life, before it entered the world of time and sense.

The true poet is not a rhymers, nor a rehearser of old stories. The story is only a canvass on which the poet's vision is represented. These themes are pictures of human history, and with us the idealization of Christianity, of human life on this sea of time, tempest-tossed and apparently wrecked. Is this mere chance and accident? Or, is it true that there is no perdition betid to any creature in the vessel?

What are these characters in the world of life? Prospero is the wise man—the spiritual—who has treasures that are not visible; he has *life-power*, power over and in himself.

Antonio is the natural man, who possesses himself of outward things:

. . . . "he needs will be
Absolute Milan." (Act I., Sc. 2.)

He is ruled by selfish and worldly desires, the man of worldly ends and ambitions.

"But I feel not
This deity in my bosom: twenty consciences,
That stand 'twixt me and Milan, candied be they
And melt, ere they molest!" (Act II., Sc. 1.)

He takes unlawful means to gain his ends; witness the bark upon which Prospero and his daughter were put. Did he gain his end?

Caliban is the servant of Prospero. The sensual principle of the spiritual man, the ground elements, the selfish pas-

sions and desires,—“these are blind and speak a strange gabble.” The spiritual powers endue them with language.

Prospero.

“I endowed thy purposes
With words that made them known :
. Taught thee each hour
One thing or other : when thou didst not,
Savage, know thine own meaning.”

There is a time in the natural history of the soul when the Caliban possesses the island. The sensuous nature is in the ascendant and the spiritual is bound by the mother.

Prospero (to Ariel).

“Thou, my slave,
As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant ;
And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthly and abhorred commands,
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
By help of her more potent ministers,
And in her most unmitigable rage,
Into a cloven pine.”

The Ariel is the service through which the elements of nature are subordinated to the divine man : as in the case of Jesus—“What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.” Also Elisha, 2 *Kings*, vi. 16, &c. Every soul existing in nature is so attended and guarded that no external accident can befall. The man who does not know this, and trusteth in his own strength, will have to go into experiences that will teach him ; he will fall into disaster. Prospero is accompanied by a mighty army that will protect and defend him.

A true work of Art is inexhaustible. You may return again and again to a master-piece, and it is wonderful how much will open to you. If of the highest order, you cannot exhaust it. Shakespeare is divinely illuminated. He has a dialect of his own. He is drawing out (the meaning of Drama) and presenting that which is in our own souls. He portrays the mysteries within us, for the soul is a microcosm ; he makes pictures that we may see and understand ourselves. In different dispensations there are different dialects : Kâlidâsa, Homer, Plato, Dante, Shakespeare, have one theme.

The key to this divine life of trust is in this :

. “And by my prescience
I find my zenith doth depend upon

A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop."

The light of intelligence is in the soul, born with it. "If now I court not," a strong expression, including to love and do, as well as to know. This divine light I must obey; seeing if "I omit," disaster follows. What shall bring us ashore from this tempest-tossed sea of life? Prospero answers,

"Providence Divine."

The natural, sensual principles are to be dispossessed of their sway; they are not to be extinguished, but they are to serve. Caliban cannot be possessed of a divine nature; he must be kept at a proper distance—under a master, to that work for which he is fit. Prospero says,

"But as 'tis.
We cannot miss him; he does make our fire
Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
That profit us."

The growths or generations of the soul are always spoken of as sons and daughters. The love of these two young persons, Miranda and Ferdinand, is representative of what goes on in the soul.

The threefold nature of the spiritual man is personified in Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban; in the natural man, by Antonio, Ferdinand, and Trinculo with Stephano.

Gonzalo is an intermediate (he is a minister of state); he represents the wisdom of the common understanding or prudence.

. . . . "This Sir Prudence, who
Should not upbraid our course." (Act II., Sc. I.)

It is the mind or judgment related to both the natural and spiritual man, common to them both. Gonzalo was allegiant both to Prospero and Antonio. The reason is always obedient to the affections.

The natural man usurps and appropriates the good things of the world like Antonio, and is afloat upon the sea of life in a well manned and well provisioned ship. The ship is wrecked, but nothing is lost. Prospero has conditioned things otherwise. Our safety here depends upon no earthly conditions. Circumstances cannot preserve the soul.

"Though the seas threaten, they are merciful:
I have cursed them without cause."

Whenever the divine intelligence and love are united in the soul, then comes prosperity. All things are new.

Miranda.

"O wonder!

How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
That has such people in't."

Prospero.

"'Tis new to thee."

In the Fifth Act we come to the doctrine of Forgiveness.

"Tho' with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
Do I take part. The rarer action is
In virtue than in vengeance; they being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further."

But, for the comprehension of the Idea, we must search for it in the constitution and historic movements of the social system of life, in which Prospero is the Church and Antonio the State. The latter is spontaneously prone to determination in sensible realization, in alliance alien to spiritual realization, or to the fruitions of divine love and wisdom. Nevertheless this alien alliance, governed by an overruling Providence, returns as compensation from the kingdom of Nature (Alonzo the king), researches into Nature's arcana, and the powers and treasures of scientific wisdom and use (the Ferdinand), with the reconciliation and restitution of all—even so that not a hair suffereth perdition. And lastly, by means of the instrumental conservations of the Church and the alliance of the fruits of the spiritual and natural generations of mind (the Miranda and the Ferdinand), humanity is enthroned in the earth *in perpetuum*.

For, in Christian idiom, the natural man and the spiritual man are each forms of mental generation; each are fruitful in the earth. The progeny of the one, spiritual wisdom (the Miranda); of the other, natural science (the Ferdinand); and the issues from the marriage of these are the proliferations of the human world.

We shall not have mastered Shakespeare's "Tempest" till we find in his discourse the resolution of the social problems of Justice, Injustice, Providence, Fate, Forgiveness, Reconciliation and Restitution.